

Teresa A. McCluen
111 Deer Haven Court
Harriman, TN 37748

April 10, 2022

The Honorable Thomas A. Varlan

Your Honor:

Thank you for taking the time to read this. My name is Teresa McCluen and my husband is Scott McCluen. To tell you a little about me, I worked as a dental assistant for many years then I worked as a counselor for a school for troubled youth until I retired. I am Darren Payne's aunt.

I have watched Darren grow up. To say he was raised by good parents is an understatement. Darren was raised in church and was always a well-mannered young man. Everyone loved Darren and he was a role model to the youth of the church. I go to the same church.

Darren played basketball in high school and was a great athlete. I, as his aunt, never saw any problems with drugs or alcohol.

Darren became a coach for the city league basketball and he knew, early on, that this was his calling.

He later graduated from college and became an assistant coach at the high school. He used to bring the basketball team to swim at my pool. Everyone looked up to him.

He got married to a girl who graduated from college and became a teacher. They had two children. Darren was a remarkable dad. He loves his children so much.

Honestly, I am still shocked at what happened to Darren because he was truly living the American dream.

I first noticed a change in Darren after he had major back surgery. His spine was deteriorating and he had to have it totally redone. I believe this was in 2013.

Gradually after that, Darren stopped coming to church and I saw less and less of him. Later, my brother, his dad, told me to pray for Darren that he was having problems. Of course, later I found out the reason why.

Your Honor, this has broken my heart as well as his parents' hearts. We never dreamed this could happen to someone like Darren, but that's what drugs do, they destroy your life.

I feel in my heart the Darren realized what drugs did in his life and that he really can be rehabilitated. Right before he was arrested, he had started coming back to church, so I know the Lord was working in his life.

I am praying that you will show mercy to Darren and please give him a chance to get his life back. Everyone deserves a second chance.

Thank you again for taking the time to read my letter.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Teresa A. McCluen".

Teresa A. McCluen